are not available, they get treatment from Army Hospitals subject to either of the condition that no civil hospital exists in that location or even if it is exists there is no accommodation in the civil hospital. No separate data is maintained regarding the number of GREF persons availing CGHS facilities or getting treatment from Army Hospitals.

Enhancement of uncongenial climate allowance

1712. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has cleared a proposal to enhance uncongenial climate allowance by over four times and increase travel facilities for armed forces personnel posted in isolated and hazardous high altitude areas along the Line of Control; and

(b) if so, the details of the new rates?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) Allowance is payable to Armed Forces personnel deployed in High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) areas. The Government has recently decided to grant enhanced rates of High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) Allowance to troops deployed in more difficult, hazardous and isolated areas above 14000 ft within the existing High Altitude (Uncongenial Climate) Areas at the rate of Rs.5600 per month for Officers and Rs.3734 per month for Personnel Below Officer Rank with a view to rationalize the High Altitude Allowance. The enhanced allowance is 80% of Siachen allowance and is comparable to Siachen allowance in proportion to the physical hardships being faced by the Armed Force Personnel.

Besides, the Government has decided to provide the following travel facilities for Armed Forces personnel:

(i) Grant of one additional free rail warrant every year to all ranks of Armed Forces serving in field/high altitude/counter insurgency/counter terrorism operational areas to travel to and from their duty station and Home Town/Selected Place of Residence.

(ii) All Service personnel would be eligible to avail leave travel concession once in a year to their hometown in India or Selected Place of Residence in India and every alternate year to any place in India in lieu of hometown or Selected Place of Residence without any distance restriction.

Revealing of military information by army personnel

1713. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Army personnel are revealing startling military information on one of the most popular online social networking sites known as Orkut;

(b) if so, whether Indian Army has instituted an enquiry into such incidents; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in the matter of breach of security in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) No such report has come to the notice of the Government. However, the Indian Army is sensitized periodically to various nuances of military security and the implications of sharing of military information with strangers or transmission on unsecured media. All cases of breach of security when detected are investigated through a Court of Inquiry as per extant guidelines and appropriate actions are taken based on findings of the enquiry.

CAG's observations on defence procurements

1714. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CAG has pointed out that delays plagued major defence buys and regretted that the time gap between the assessment and the receipt of goods was alarmingly long, even decades in many cases and such delays had serious repercussions and that defence R&D with an outlay of Rs.5,000 crore was an area where accountability often took shelter under the policy of self-reliance, and indigenization became a reason for delay;

(b) whether the CAG has suggested accountability needs to be re-emphasized to enable better assessment of return from investment; and

(c) to what extent those loopholes in the defence deals were considered?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) pointed out delays in some defence buys in the report for the year ended March 2006, submitted in 2007.

Contributions made by the Defence Research and Development (R&D) have been acknowledged from time to time by various agencies. Wherever there are delays in products being realized by DRDO, import option is considered to fill the gap.

(b) While attention has been drawn to delay in some defence buys in the CAG report for the year ended March 2006, there does not appear to be a specific reference to re-emphasise accountability aspect.

(c) Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP-2006) has further streamlined the procurement procedure and also included a broad time frame for procurement activities. Recommendations of the CAG have also been taken into account while formulating the DPP-2006.

Foreign equity participation in HAL

1715. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ministry of Defence had forwarded any proposals recommending 50 per cent foreign equity participation in Hindustan Aeronautical Ltd. (Defence PSU); and